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| DECISION-MAKER: | CABINET | | |
| SUBJECT: | SCRUTINY INQUIRY PANEL – PROTECTING, PRESERVING AND PROMOTING THE RIVER ITCHEN IN SOUTHAMPTON | | |
| DATE OF DECISION: | 13 JUNE 2023 | | |
| REPORT OF: | CLLR SAVAGE CHAIR OF THE SCRUTINY INQUIRY PANEL - 2022/23 | | |
| <u>CONTACT DETAILS</u> | | | |
| Author: | Title | Scrutiny Manager | |
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| STATEMENT OF CONFIDENTIALITY | | | |
| None | | | |
| BRIEF SUMMARY | | | |
| <p>From October 2022 to March 2023 the Scrutiny Inquiry Panel undertook evidence gathering sessions as they conducted the Protecting, Preserving and Promoting the River Itchen in Southampton inquiry. The final report was approved by the Inquiry Panel on 20 April 2023.</p> <p>The Scrutiny Inquiry Panel final report, attached as Appendix 1, contains a number of recommendations. The report is to be considered by the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee (OSMC) on 8 June. If OSMC approve the report at their June meeting, Cabinet needs to formally respond to these recommendations, summarised in Appendix 2, within two months to meet the requirements in the Council's constitution.</p> | | | |
| RECOMMENDATIONS: | | | |
| | (i) | Subject to the report being approved by the OSMC on 8 June, Cabinet is recommended to receive the attached Scrutiny Inquiry Panel report to enable the Executive to formulate its response to the recommendations contained within it, in order to comply with the requirements set out in the Council's Constitution. | |
| REASONS FOR REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS | | | |
| 1. | The overview and scrutiny procedure rules in part 4 of the Council's Constitution requires the Executive to consider all inquiry reports that have been endorsed by the OSMC, and to submit a formal response to the recommendations contained within them within two months of their receipt. | | |
| ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED | | | |
| 2. | Not applicable. | | |
| DETAIL (Including consultation carried out) | | | |
| 3. | The OSMC, at its meeting in September 2022, requested that the Scrutiny Inquiry Panel undertake an inquiry focussing on protecting, preserving and promoting the River Itchen in Southampton. | | |

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| 4. | <p>The set objectives of the inquiry were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. To identify the various different users and uses of the River Itchen in Southampton and the challenges this presents. b. To understand existing plans and opportunities to address the identified challenges. c. To identify good practice being employed to protect, preserve and promote urban rivers elsewhere. d. To identify what initiatives and approaches could work well in Southampton to protect, preserve and promote the River Itchen. |
| 5. | <p>The Scrutiny Inquiry Panel undertook the inquiry over 6 evidence gathering meetings and received information from a wide variety of organisations. This included Wessex Rivers Trust, Natural England, The Environment Agency, Southern Water, ABP, Ocean Infinity, MDL Marinas, Hampshire Chamber of Commerce, Business South, British Canoeing, Glasgow City Council, Thames21 and Solent Forum.</p> |
| 6. | <p>Evidence was also provided by Southampton City Council officers representing various departments and from numerous voluntary, community and recreational groups who are passionate about the River Itchen in Southampton.</p> |
| 7. | <p>The final report, attached as Appendix 1, will be considered by the OSMC on 8 June 2023. The report contains a number of recommendations which, if implemented, the Panel believe will improve the protection, preservation and promotion of the River Itchen in Southampton. The conclusions and recommendations are summarised in Appendix 2.</p> |
| 8. | <p>Subject to approval by the OSMC, the Executive needs to consider the inquiry recommendations and to formally respond within two months of the date of receiving this report in order to meet the requirements set out in the Council's constitution.</p> |

RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

Capital/Revenue/Property/Other

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| 9. | <p>In practice any future resource implications arising from this review will be dependent upon whether, and how, each individual recommendation within the Inquiry report is progressed by the Executive. More detailed work will need to be undertaken by the Executive in considering its response to each of the recommendations set out in the Inquiry report.</p> |
| 10. | <p>During the Inquiry a number of potential sources of funding were identified that could help to deliver certain recommendations. These include the Nitrogen Neutrality Scheme.</p> |

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

Statutory power to undertake proposals in the report:

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| 11. | <p>The duty to undertake overview and scrutiny is set out in Part 1A Section 9 of the Local Government Act 2000.</p> |
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Other Legal Implications:

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| 12. | None |
| RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS | |
| 13. | The requirements with regards to receiving and responding to scrutiny inquiry reports are set out in the constitution and have been explained to those who contributed to the inquiry. |
| POLICY FRAMEWORK IMPLICATIONS | |
| 14. | In the 2022/2030 Corporate Plan, under the goal of - 'A proud and resilient city', a key objective is to create cleaner, more attractive, and welcoming green and open spaces, to improve the experience of those living, working, studying and visiting Southampton. Implementing the recommendations within the attached inquiry final report would help to deliver this objective. |
| KEY DECISION | No |
| WARDS/COMMUNITIES AFFECTED: | None directly as a result of this report |
| <u>SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION</u> | |
| Appendices | |
| 1. | Protecting, Preserving and Promoting the River Itchen in Southampton Inquiry – Final report |
| 2. | Protecting, Preserving and Promoting the River Itchen in Southampton Inquiry – Conclusions and recommendations |
| Documents In Members' Rooms | |
| 1. | None |
| Equality Impact Assessment | |
| Do the implications/subject of the report require an Equality and Safety Impact Assessments (ESIA) to be carried out? | No |
| Data Protection Impact Assessment | |
| Do the implications/subject of the report require a Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA) to be carried out? | No |
| Other Background Documents | |
| Equality Impact Assessment and Other Background documents available for inspection at: | |
| Title of Background Paper(s) | Relevant Paragraph of the Access to Information Procedure Rules / Schedule 12A allowing document to be Exempt/Confidential (if applicable) |
| 1. | None |